# BLACK BOLT™

#5

SALADIN AHMED
CHRISTIAN WARD
FRAZER IRVING

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# BLACK BOLT

is the king of the Inhumans, an off-splinter of humanity imbued with amazing abilities. But these gifts sometimes come with a price: Black Bolt's slightest whisper can shatter mountains. His voice has destroyed many lives, but it has saved countless others.

When the Silent King speaks, the world hears him.

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But now no one can hear him. Facing imprisonment, Black Bolt's treacherous brother, Maximus the Mad, used his psychic powers and image-altering technology to send Black Bolt in his place. Now trapped in a strange alien prison, Black Bolt and his fellow prisoners find themselves at the mercy of the Jailer as he feeds on their powers, killing and resurrecting them for his own amusement.

Black Bolt and his fellow prisoners—Metal Master, the Absorbing Man, Raava and Blinky—staged a breakout, temporarily regaining their powers, but even Black Bolt's voice could not defeat the Jailer's true form. In punishment, the Jailer separated them and left Black Bolt and Crusher chained and suffocating, intending to silence them forever.

Luckily for Black Bolt, his teleporting dog Lockjaw arrived just in the nick of time to save him—but that meant leaving his newfound friends behind…

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Writer
**SALADIN AHMED**

Artists
**FRAZER IRVING** (PGS. 1-4) **& CHRISTIAN WARD** (PGS. 5-20)

Letterer
**VC's CLAYTON COWLES**

Cover Artist
**CHRISTIAN WARD**

Design
**NICHOLAS RUSSELL**

Logo Design
**JAY BOWEN**

Associate Editor
**SARAH BRUNSTAD**

Editor
**WIL MOSS**

BLACK BOLT created by
**STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY**

Executive Editor
**TOM BREVOORT**

Editor in Chief
**AXEL ALONSO**

Chief Creative Officer
**JOE QUESADA**

President
**DAN BUCKLEY**

Executive Producer
**ALAN FINE**



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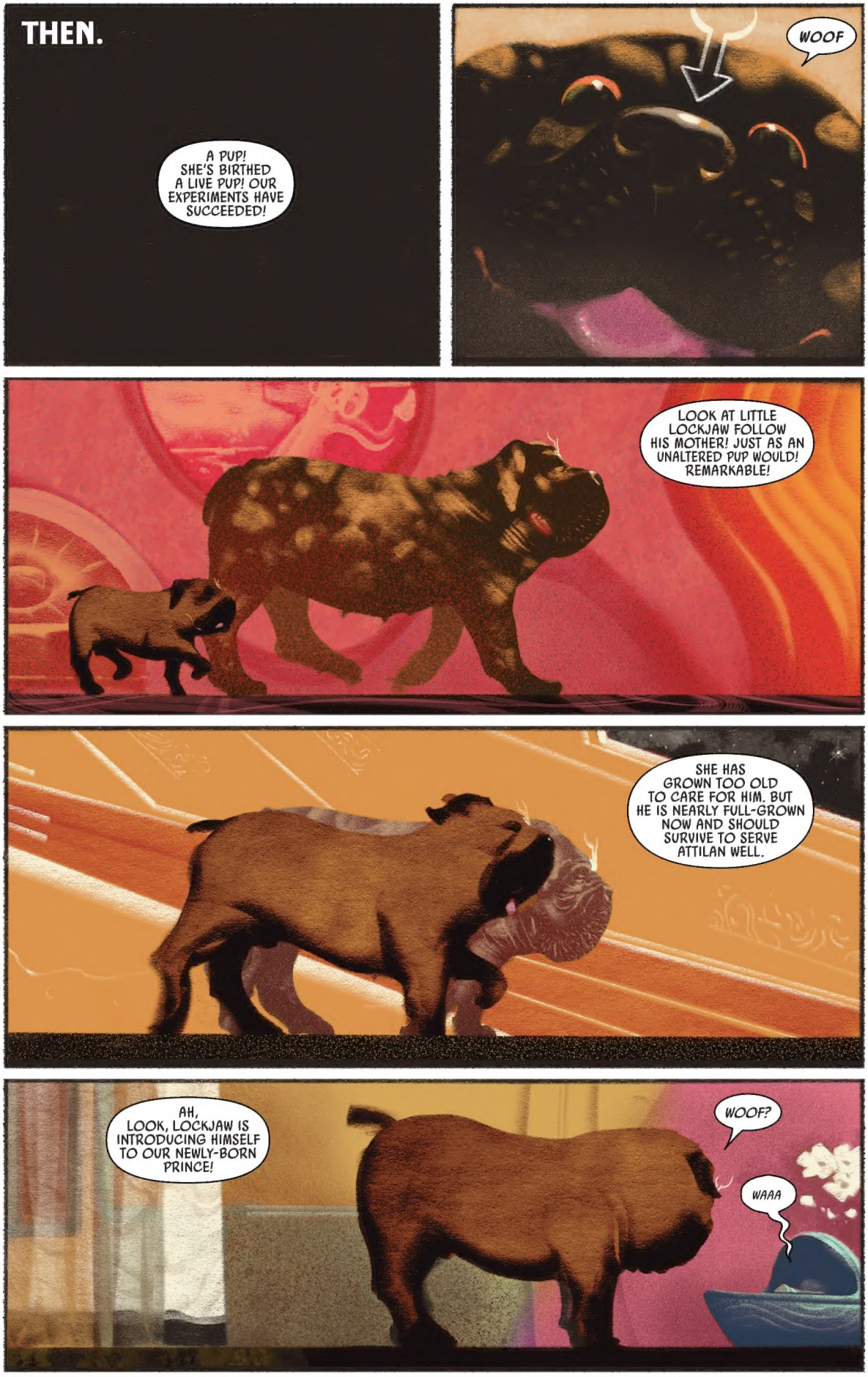
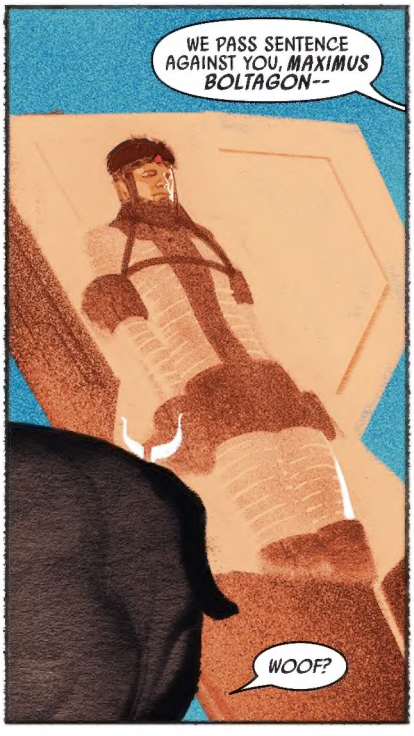

THEN.
A PUP! SHE'S BIRTHED A LIVE PUP! OUR EXPERIMENTS HAVE SUCCEEDED!
WOOF
LOOK AT LITTLE LOCKJAW FOLLOW HIS MOTHER! JUST AS AN UNALTERED PUP WOULD! REMARKABLE!
SHE HAS GROWN TOO OLD TO CARE FOR HIM. BUT HE IS NEARLY FULL-GROWN NOW AND SHOULD SURVIVE TO SERVE ATTILAN WELL.
AH, LOOK, LOCKJAW IS INTRODUCING HIMSELF TO OUR NEWLY-BORN PRINCE!
WOOF?
WAAA

WOOF!
WAAAAA
WAAAA

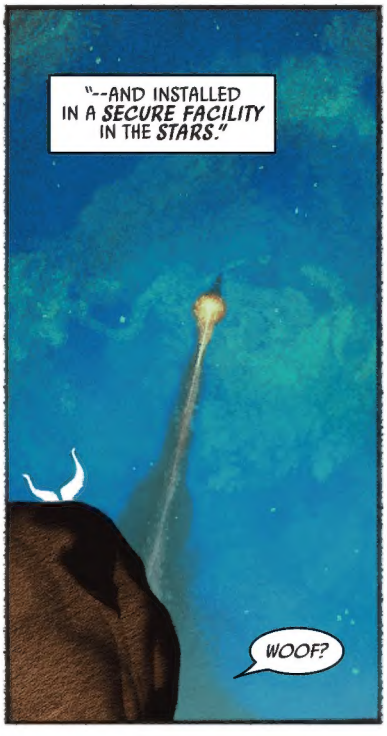
THE INFANT PRINCE'S POWERS ARE TOO TERRIBLE! HE MUST BE ISOLATED, OR HIS VOICE WILL DESTROY US ALL.
THE HOUSEBEAST LOCKJAW REFUSES TO LEAVE THE PRINCE'S SIDE.
DAY 2214
MESSAGE FROM FATHER AND MOTHER:
SON, OUR STUDIES OF YOUR REMARKABLE ABILITIES CONTINUE. WE HAD HIGH HOPES WHEN WE EXPOSED YOU TO TERRIGEN IN UTERO, BUT THE GLORIOUS POWER OUR EXPERIMENT UNLOCKED IS EVEN GREATER THAN WE IMAGINED. UNTIL YOU CAN CONTROL THAT POWER, HOWEVER, YOU MUST REMAIN IN THIS SEALED ANECHOIC CHAMBER. WE ONCE AGAIN DENY YOUR S FOR FREE MOVEMENT AND RS. WE TRUST YOU WILL ERTAKE THIS DUTY WITH NCELY DIGNITY.
WOOF!

WOOF!

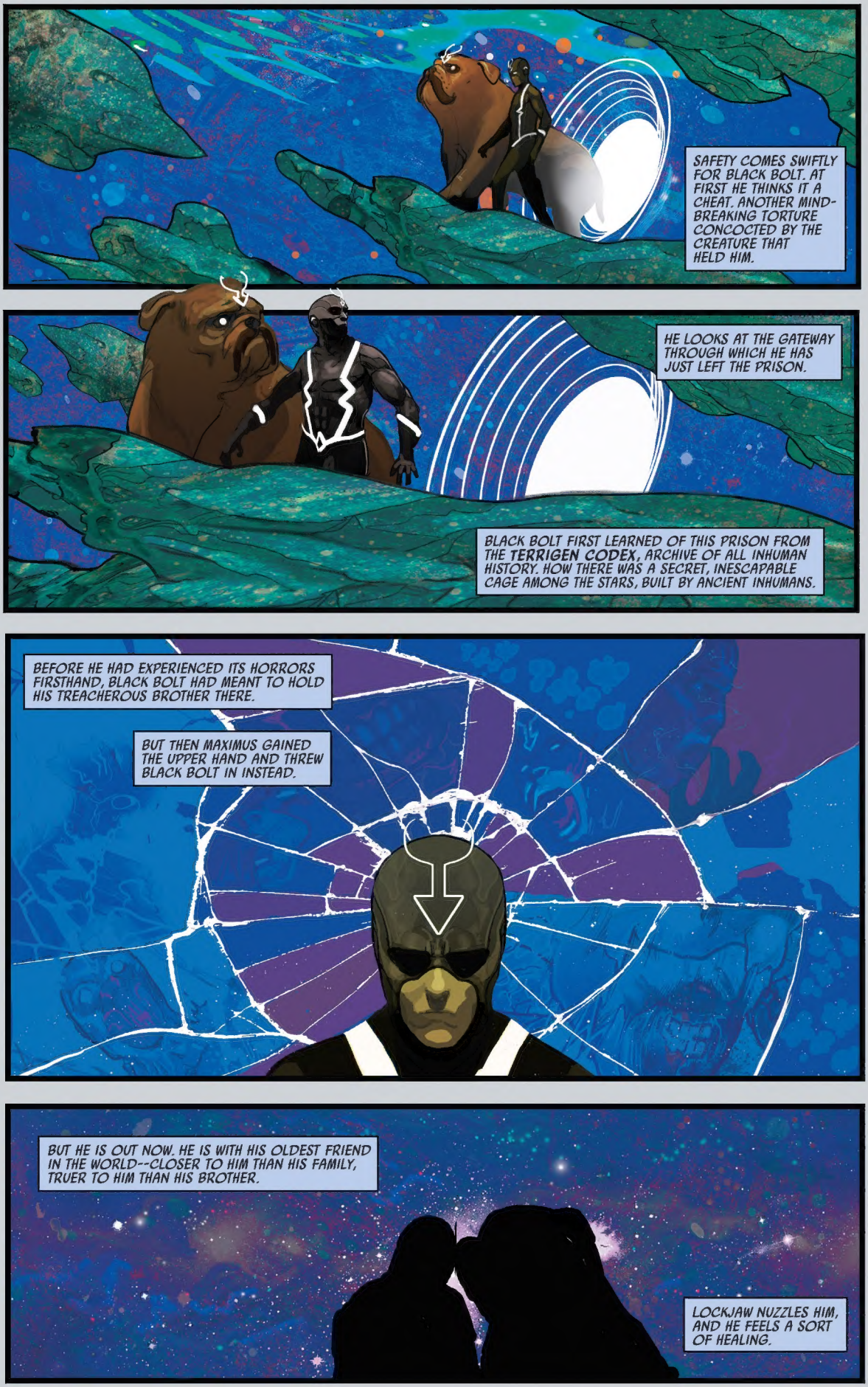
WOOF!


WE PASS SENTENCE AGAINST YOU, MAXIMUS BOLTAGON--
WOOF?

--YOU WILL BE TAKEN FAR FROM HERE--
GRRRRRR!


"--AND INSTALLED IN A SECURE FACILITY IN THE STARS."
WOOF?

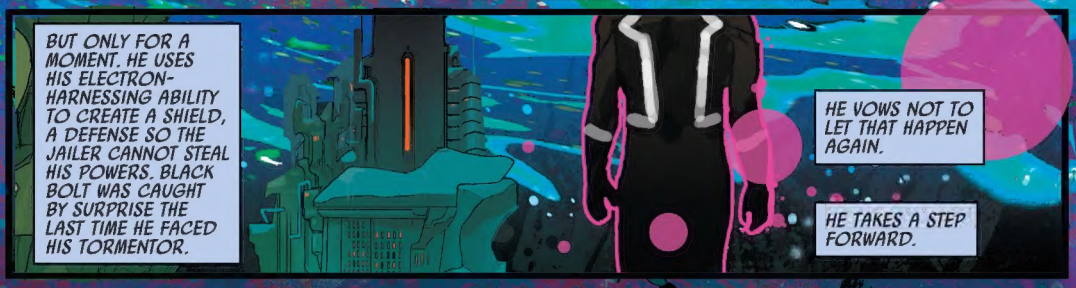
THE MOON.
??
=SNIFF=
THE FAR EDGE OF THE GALAXY. NOW.
=SNIFF=
WOOF
LOCKJAW!


SAFETY COMES SWIFTLY FOR BLACK BOLT. AT FIRST HE THINKS IT A CHEAT. ANOTHER MIND-BREAKING TORTURE CONCOCTED BY THE CREATURE THAT HELD HIM.
HE LOOKS AT THE GATEWAY THROUGH WHICH HE HAS JUST LEFT THE PRISON.
BLACK BOLT FIRST LEARNED OF THIS PRISON FROM THE TERRIGEN CODEX, ARCHIVE OF ALL INHUMAN HISTORY. HOW THERE WAS A SECRET, INESCAPABLE CAGE AMONG THE STARS, BUILT BY ANCIENT INHUMANS.
BEFORE HE HAD EXPERIENCED ITS HORRORS FIRSTHAND, BLACK BOLT HAD MEANT TO HOLD HIS TREACHEROUS BROTHER THERE.
BUT THEN MAXIMUS GAINED THE UPPER HAND AND THREW BLACK BOLT IN INSTEAD.
BUT HE IS OUT NOW. HE IS WITH HIS OLDEST FRIEND IN THE WORLD--CLOSER TO HIM THAN HIS FAMILY, TRUER TO HIM THAN HIS BROTHER.
LOCKJAW NUZZLES HIM, AND HE FEELS A SORT OF HEALING.

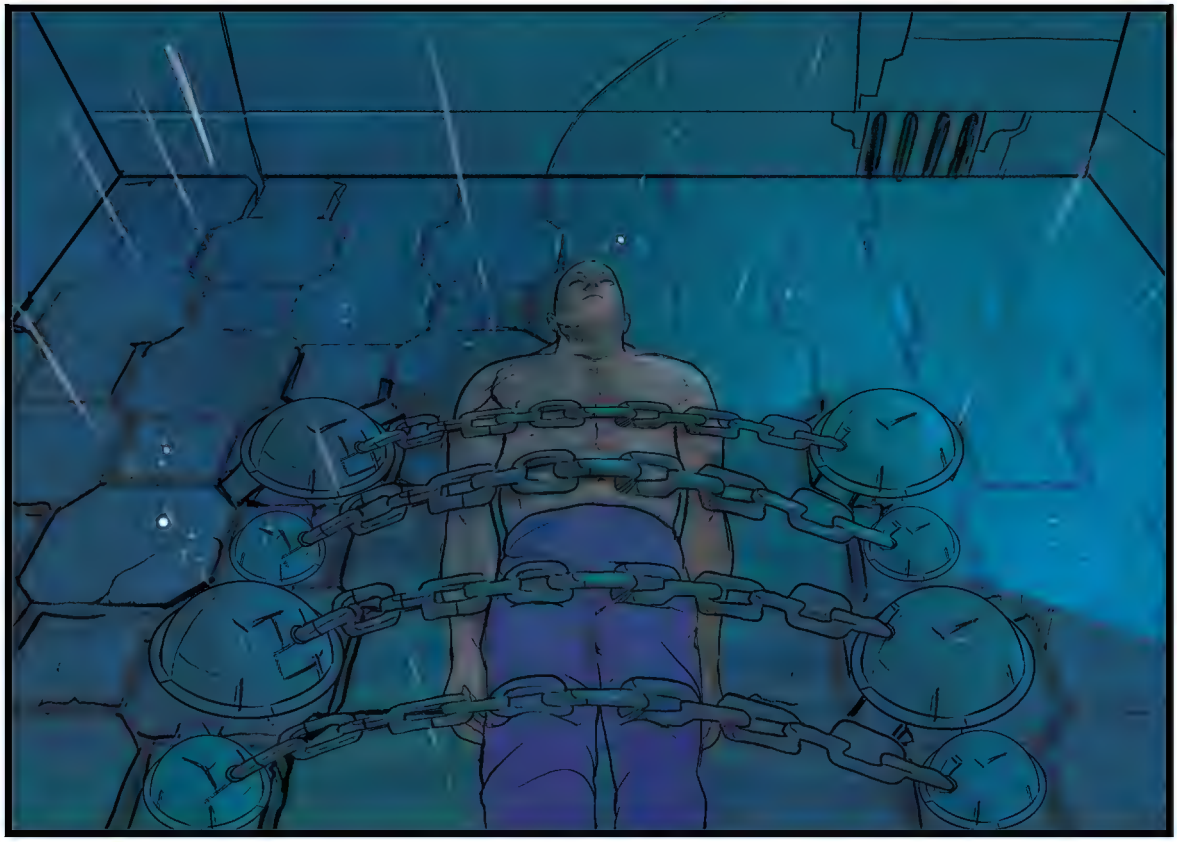
BLACK BOLT FEELS HIS AWESOME POWER FLOW SLOWLY THROUGH HIM AGAIN, AND HE REALIZES HE IS FREE. FREE. HE DID NOT KNOW UNTIL THIS MOMENT WHAT THAT WORD MEANT. HOW MUCH IT MATTERED.
BUT HIS OLD FRIEND BRINGS MORE THAN RESCUE. MORE THAN COMFORT. LOCKJAW BRINGS BLACK BOLT A WARNING.
THOSE HE LOVES ARE IN DANGER.
MAXIMUS HAS TAKEN BLACK BOLT'S SHAPE.
SO NOW, BLACK BOLT FACES A CHOICE.
HE STARES AT THE PRISON.

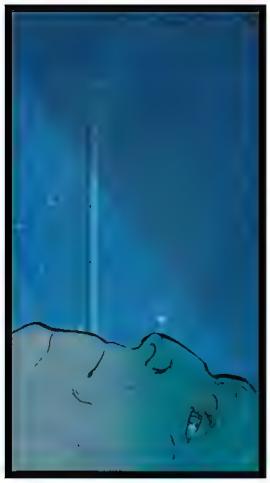
OUTSIDE ITS WALLS IS HIS FAMILY. HIS QUEEN. EVERYTHING BLACK BOLT HAS EVER FOUGHT FOR. EVERYTHING HE THOUGHT HE WOULD NEVER SEE AGAIN.
OUTSIDE ITS WALLS THERE IS OPEN AIR. THE LIGHT OF STARS.
INSIDE THE PRISON THERE ARE STREET THIEVES, MONSTERS, AND THUGS.
INSIDE IS THE JAILER, WHO BURNED BLACK BOLT'S BODY AND RIPPED AWAY A PIECE OF HIS MIND.

BLACK BOLT STANDS FROZEN, BUT NOT FROM INDECISION. HE KNOWS WHO NEEDS HIS HELP MOST.
HIS BROTHER IS DANGEROUS--BUT MEDUSA CAN HANDLE MAXIMUS.
NO, BLACK BOLT--CALLED BY SOME THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON EARTH--STANDS FROZEN WITH FEAR.


BUT ONLY FOR A MOMENT. HE USES HIS ELECTRON-HARNESSING ABILITY TO CREATE A SHIELD, A DEFENSE SO THE JAILER CANNOT STEAL HIS POWERS. BLACK BOLT WAS CAUGHT BY SURPRISE THE LAST TIME HE FACED HIS TORMENTOR.
HE VOWS NOT TO LET THAT HAPPEN AGAIN.
HE TAKES A STEP FORWARD.

FOR HE IS AFRAID, BUT HE HAS SEEN MEN AND WOMEN AND CHILDREN TRAPPED IN A PLACE NO CRIME CAN JUSTIFY. THIEVES AND KILLERS, YES. BUT LIVING SOULS.
AND BLACK BOLT HAS COME TO THINK OF SOME OF THEM AS FRIENDS.





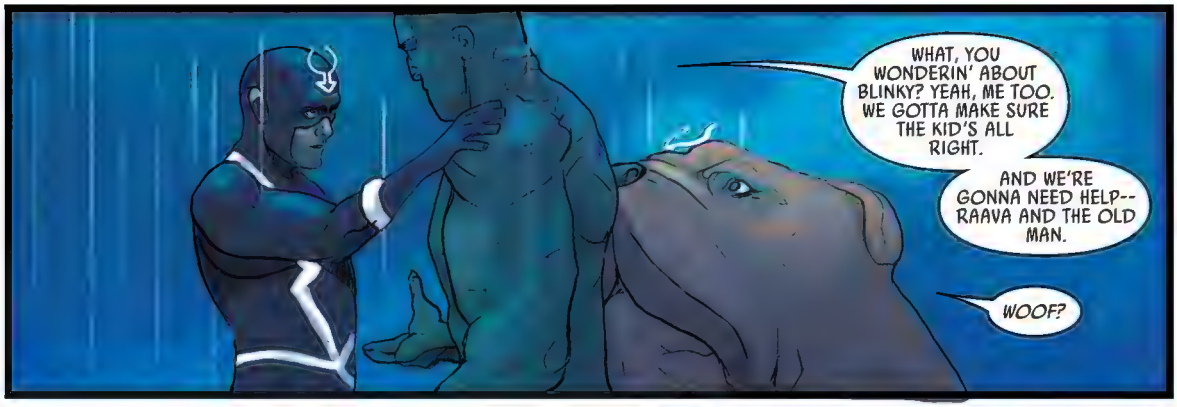
HUH?

WELL, LOOK WHO CAME BACK.

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN ON YOUR END, WISHBONE? BEEN DAYS HERE.
SURPRISED I'M ALIVE? NO THANKS TO YOU. I SUFFOCATED IN THERE. HE'S KILLED ME A LOT OF TIMES, BUT THAT WAS A NEW ONE.

HE KNEW YOU'D COME BACK. IT'S WHY HE REVIVED ME. HE WANTS US TO WATCH YOU DIE. FOR GOOD, I MEAN. AND THEN KEEP US LIVING HERE. FEEDING HIM. KNOWING THAT NO ONE HAS EVER GOTTEN AWAY...

SNAP
WHA-WHAT? YOU...HAVE YOUR POWERS BACK? IS THIS ANOTHER MESSED-UP HEAD TRICK?
NAW... THIS IS REAL. I CAN FEEL IT. I CAN ABSORB AGAIN! YES!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA LEAVE ME HERE, WISHBONE. YOU CAME BACK. YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
NOW LET'S GO FIND THIS SICK BASTARD. I GOT SOME ANGER TO WORK OUT.
WOOF!


WHAT, YOU WONDERIN' ABOUT BLINKY? YEAH, ME TOO. WE GOTTA MAKE SURE THE KID'S ALL RIGHT.
AND WE'RE GONNA NEED HELP-- RAAVA AND THE OLD MAN.
WOOF?

NICE TA MEET YOU, TOO, SPACE-MUTT.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE EVERYBODY'S BEING HELD...

"...BUT I KNOW WHO DOES."

I KNEW WE'D FIND YOU HERE, SPYDER. YOU GOT A REAL PREDICTABLE ROUTINE. NOW LISTEN--

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, CREEL.
CLICK

SRAT SRAT
SSSH
ZZZ
URK--
S-STAY AWAY!
CAREFUL YOU DON'T FRY HIM, WISHBONE! WE NEED HIM ALIVE.
WHERE'S BLINKY, JERKBALL? I'M GIVING YOU ONE CHANCE. MY BUDDY WILL KNOW IF YOU LIE. AND IF YOU DO, I'LL SUFFOCATE YOU WITH YOUR OWN TOY.

HIS NAME WAS PELYN. HE SMELLED OF THE SEAS. A SCULPTOR. HE HAD SUCH MAGNIFICENT HANDS...
IT SOUNDS LIKE =COUGH= LIKE YOU LOVED HIM VERY MUCH.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT LOVE WAS, CHILD. I ONLY UNDERSTOOD POWER AND CONQUEST. I GREW CRUEL AND MONSTROUS, AND HE CONSPIRED AGAINST ME.
I HAD HIM EXECUTED IN FRONT OF MY PALACE.
ALMOST OUT OF AIR. MOLYB? I'M SCARED. THE JAILER SOUNDED SO MUCH ANGRIER THIS TIME. I =COUGH= I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
NOR DO I, CHILD. =COUGH= =COUGH= I... EH?

CRUSHER? BLACK BOLT? YOU'RE ALIVE! YOU'RE FREE! =COUGH= =COUGH=
WE AIN'T THE ONLY ONES, KID.
WHAT DO YOU--
OH.
SNAP
MY INNER EYE! I CAN SEE AGAIN! AND BREATHE!
MY POWER IS RETURNING AS WELL. BUT THIS CHAMBER HAS WEAKENED ME.

WELL, YOU BETTER RALLY FAST, GRAMPS. WE'RE GONNA NEED YOU.

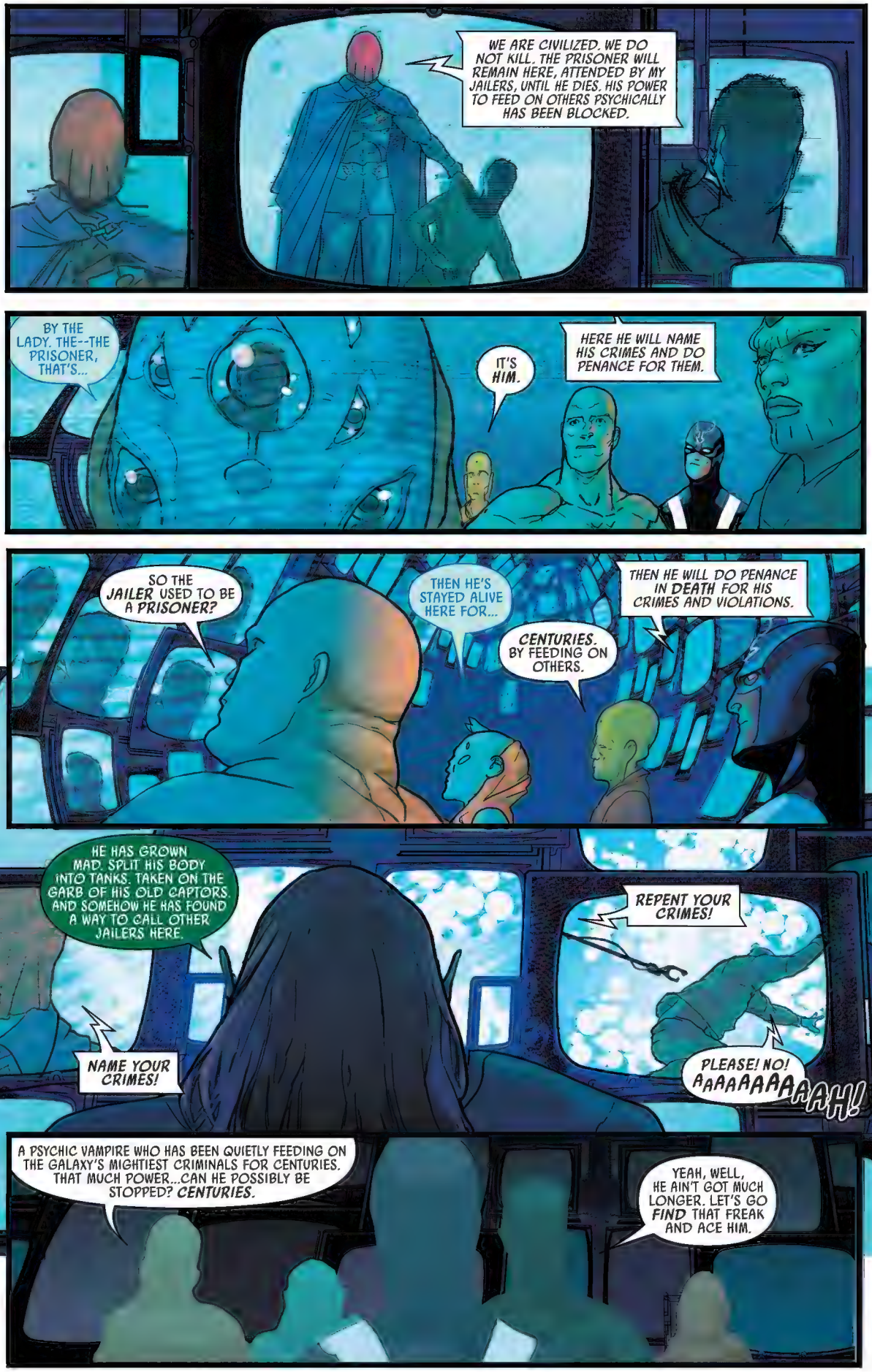
ALL RIGHT, CREEP, NOW WHERE'S RAAVA?
THE PIRATE? SHE IS NOT FAR...

HER CELL IS HERE.
WHOOSH
YOU HAVE COME. GOOD
RAAVA TIRES OF THESE CHAINS.
THEN, MY DEAR...
...ALLOW ME.
FREE! AGAIN, RAAVA HOLDS HUNGRY SON AND ANGRY DAUGHTER IN HER HANDS!
THE GANG'S ALL HERE, THEN.
NOW WHERE'S YER BOSS, FREAK?
THE JAILER'S CHAMBER IS AT THE END OF THAT CORRIDOR... NOT THAT YOU'LL LIVE TO REACH IT!

YOU SQUIRMY LITTLE TWERP! I'M GONNA POUND YOU INTO PASTE!
WHAT DID YOU JUST--
ZAP
GRRR...
OUT OF MY WAY, BEAST!
YIP!

ZAP
ZZZAAAAP
AAAAAGGGH!
DAMN, WISHBONE! REMIND ME NEVER TO MESS WITH YOUR DOG.
METAL MASTER! CAN YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE REST OF THESE MACHINES?
MY POWER HAS BEEN SLOW IN RETURNING TO ME, PERHAPS DUE TO MY AGE, BUT THESE MACHINES ARE SIMPLE ENOUGH.
WELL, *THAT'S* BETTER. LOOKS LIKE THE POOCH IS HURT PRETTY BAD. BUT HE'S STILL BREATHIN', AT LEAST.
MORE THAN SPYDER CAN SAY!

I'M SORRY, WISHBONE. BUT WE GOTTA KEEP MOVING. HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. SAFER HERE THAN HE WILL BE GOING AFTER THE JAILER.
=WHEEZE=
THAT MUTT SAVED MY LIFE. WE WON'T LEAVE WITHOUT HIM, WISHBONE, YOU GOT MY WORD.
BUT WE GOTTA GO FIND THIS BASTARD AND END THIS.
NOW.
I CAN SENSE HIM NOW. EVEN WITH BLACK BOLT'S SHIELDING, THIS IS HARD, YOU GUYS. IT'S LIKE STARING AT THE TWIN SUNS AT NOON.
WE ARE NEARING THE CENTER OF THIS PLACE. RAAVA CAN FEEL IT.
SOME SORT OF SURVEILLANCE ROOM.
ANOTHER PLACE FOR THIS CREEP TO WATCH US?
NO. THE METAL IN THIS ROOM IS *OLDER*.
IT SEEMS TO RECOGNIZE YOU, BLACK BOLT. OR YOUR *LINEAGE*. FOR THIS CHAMBER IS OF ANCIENT INHUMAN DESIGN, OF THAT I AM CERTAIN. PERHAPS YOUR PRESENCE WILL ACTIVATE SOME--
WHIRRRRRRR
AH.
WHAT TRICKERY?
*LET THIS SERVE AS THE MASTER JAILER'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL OF ATTILAN. IT HAS BEEN ONE YEAR SINCE THE KING'S DECREE.*


WE ARE CIVILIZED. WE DO NOT KILL. THE PRISONER WILL REMAIN HERE, ATTENDED BY MY JAILERS, UNTIL HE DIES. HIS POWER TO FEED ON OTHERS PSYCHICALLY HAS BEEN BLOCKED.
BY THE LADY. THE--THE PRISONER, THAT'S...
IT'S HIM.
HERE HE WILL NAME HIS CRIMES AND DO PENANCE FOR THEM.
SO THE JAILER USED TO BE A PRISONER?
THEN HE'S STAYED ALIVE HERE FOR...
CENTURIES. BY FEEDING ON OTHERS.
THEN HE WILL DO PENANCE IN DEATH FOR HIS CRIMES AND VIOLATIONS.
HE HAS GROWN MAD. SPLIT HIS BODY INTO TANKS. TAKEN ON THE GARB OF HIS OLD CAPTORS. AND SOMEHOW HE HAS FOUND A WAY TO CALL OTHER JAILERS HERE.
NAME YOUR CRIMES!
REPENT YOUR CRIMES!
PLEASE! NO! AAAAAAAAAAAH!
A PSYCHIC VAMPIRE WHO HAS BEEN QUIETLY FEEDING ON THE GALAXY'S MIGHTIEST CRIMINALS FOR CENTURIES. THAT MUCH POWER...CAN HE POSSIBLY BE STOPPED? CENTURIES.
YEAH, WELL, HE AIN'T GOT MUCH LONGER. LET'S GO FIND THAT FREAK AND ACE HIM.

UH, CRUSHER... I THINK SOMETHING'S FOUND US!
N-NO!
Y-YOU!
M-MA?
BLACK BOLT HARDLY HEARS THE OTHERS.
FOR BEFORE HIM STAND HIS PARENTS, WHOM BLACK BOLT HIMSELF DESTROYED WITH HIS VOICE.
BEFORE HIM THE DEAD WALK.
AND THE DEAD ARE ANGRY.
TO BE CONTINUED...

# SOUND OFF!

We want to hear from you! Send your emails to **mheroes@marvel.com** and please mark them **"OKAY TO PRINT."**

Uh-oh. Looks like Black Bolt will have to do some penance after all. But if you're anything like me, all you can think right now is "NOT LOCKJAW!!!" Especially after that beautifully told flashback story from guest artist Frazer Irving, who will be joining us again for issue #7! Never fear, ongoing artist Christian Ward is in this for the long haul, but he'll be taking a little time off after issue #6 — the conclusion of our first arc — to take care of a new arrival. Boltagons, meet baby Olive!

Christian is, he assures us, exactly as terrified as this photo suggests. But he STILL took time out this month to answer a few of your lovely letters, along with story architect Saladin Ahmed, so let's get to it!

After falling in love with some of the newer Inhumans, such as MoonGirl, Ms. Marvel, Mosaic and others, I decided to dive into the Royal family, and I started with KARNAK by Warren Ellis. After being completely floored by the KARNAK mini, I figured I'd jump into the new BLACK BOLT series and see where it took me. Boy was I not ready! The story so far has transcended anything that possibly imagined. This cosmic tale has totally engulfed me in its excellence and Christian Ward's art is so profoundly vivid in its execution. I never thought the day would come where I'm mentioning Black Bolt as one of my favorite characters in the Marvel Universe. Similar to the brilliance of Tom King's VISION, Saladin Ahmed's take on Black Bolt has brought the character to a whole new level. Thanks to the whole creative team for making something we can feel.

In addition, Absorbing Man, Blinky, Metal Master and Raava make for great teammates! Can't wait till learn more about them too!! Keep up the tremendous job!!!!

Wolf "WISHBONE" Warner

**CHRISTIAN:** Thanks Wolf! Glad you've fallen in love with Black Bolt as much as we have. VISION was my favorite book of last year, so I'm thrilled by the comparison.

Hello, Team Black Bolt!

I just wanted to pop in and say that this is one of the best--if not the best--titles I'm currently following. I picked up the first issue on (my first) FCBD, and added BLACK BOLT to my subscription box within two days. That's pretty significant, since I'm a broke college student who doesn't really have the time (or money--mostly money) to commit to a regular subscription. But frankly, this series is well worth the money.

I was initially drawn for two reasons: 1) Black Bolt is a character I always found fascinating, but never really got to connect with in the same way I did Daredevil or Superman, since most of the books I've read with him were ensemble titles like FF or NEW AVENGERS; and 2) Twitter.

I saw Chris Samnee retweet some of Christian Ward's art from the book and was quite captivated by its use of bright colors, minimal lines, and well-shaped silhouettes. But before that, I would see my friend Michael retweet some choice excerpts from Saladin Ahmed's feed, which always offered very compelling intellectual nuggets of wisdom to mull over. Seeing that he was writing a comic was an intriguing prospect. Not just for his perspective--more than that, it was seeing a name like mine credited on the cover of a Big Two book. I'm Desi, like Kamala Khan, but I can still appreciate seeing my middle name listed under "writer."

Anyway, thank you for your time, and I wish you a successful, creatively enriching experience in continuing to make this book!

Shahbaz Ahmed Khan

**CHRISTIAN:** Thanks Shahbaz! There're lots of great comics that you could be spending your money on so thank YOU for spending it on our weird little super hero sci-fi book. We'll keep working hard to make it worth your money.

**SALADIN:** Hi Shabhaz! Thanks so much for reading, and glad you're digging the book. And I'm very happy to be representing for all the 'Ahmeds' out there! Cheers!

Hi Saladin and crew,

I just had to write in after issue #4. I have always liked Creel, and this issue really got the heart of this super villain right. Seeing him bond with the King of the Inhumans was awesome and very touching. I now really want them to remain friends and be this odd couple of friends that the rest of the MCU don't get. Kudos on a story which proves again that great characterizations are the key to great story telling.

I even forgive you for making Thor, my fav Marvel hero, seem a bit of a jerk.

Cheers,
Dapo

**CHRISTIAN:** Thanks, Dapo. Unpopular Opinion: Thor IS a Jerk. Especially old-school Thor, with his bleach blonde jerk hair and jerky knee-high boots. What. A. Jerk. And don't get me started on Spider-Man. We're totally Team Absorbing Man over here. That big loveable chump.

P.S. My pug is actually called Thor (and he's a jerk too!)

**SALADIN:** Creel has been a favorite of mine for 30 years, since the original SECRET WARS back in the '80s. So getting to tell his story like that was great, and Christian really brought the tale to life. Glad you enjoyed it!

I just finished reading issue number #4 and guys, you crushed me. Seriously, I mean, I honestly felt for Absorbing Man in here, and I got a brand-new sense of respect for the character and of course for Black Bolt. Man, I never thought of the fact that he couldn't do something as simple as laughing in his life up until now (he always looked so intimidating with his silence that you don't even think how tragic it is to always remain silent), and dang it I really hope to see more of this friendship between the two. Please don't tell me Black Bolt will just leave Crusher to his torment like that! I know the Inhumans and Royals are dealing with their own set of problems and all (mainly with SECRET EMPIRE), but ahhhhhhh I honestly do not know what Black Bolt will choose to do first now that he is free, and that makes me so anxious for the next issue. After this arc ends, I will now have a third favorite Inhuman--Karnak, Maximus and now Black Bolt--so keep up the great work guys.

Thanks for an awesome series.

Marko Perez

**CHRISTIAN:** You know, Marko, when I started drawing comics I had one ambition, and it wasn't to draw Spider-Man or Hulk or whatever--instead I always wanted to draw a comic book that moved someone to tears, and I think Saladin's brilliant script for issue #4 might have given me the perfect story in which to do that. I love that we've been able to crush so many people with the issue--brings a whole new meaning to the name 'Crusher' Creel.

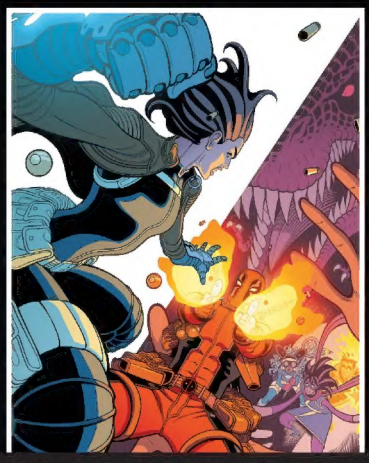
That's all we have for now, but don't miss the final confrontation with the Jailer next month! And if you just can't get poor Lockjaw off your mind, you can get your fix in INHUMANS: ONCE AND FUTURE KINGS, where Ryan North and Gustavo Duarte are showing off a whole new side of the tubby teleporter in his own backup strip!

-Sarah

NEXT:

# BLACK BOLT #6

FOR MORE INHUMANS, CHECK OUT:



SECRET WARRIORS #6

ROYALS #8

INHUMANS: ONCE AND FUTURE

Tour
THE SEVEN SEAS
With
BLACK MANTA
EMPIRE
Call 555-FISH